Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Message Text

PAGE 01 BANGKO 12888 01 OF 02 171743Z

45 S
ACTION EA-13

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ADP-00 H-01 SNM-02 NSC-10 NSCE-00 INR-10

CIAE-00 DODE-00 RSR-01 RSC-01 /053 W
---------- 115302
R 171310Z AUG 73
FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5795
AMEMBASSY RANGOON
AMEMBASSY SAIGON
AMEMBASSY SEOUL
AMEMBASSY TAIPEI
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMCONSUL UDORN
DEA HQS WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BANGKOK 12888

LIMDIS

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OREP, SNAR

SUBJ: CODEL WOLFF'S CALL ON DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER PRAPHAT

REF: BANGKOK 12512

SUMMARY: CODEL WOLFF MET WITH DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER PRAPHAT CHARUSATHIN AUGUST 16. WOLFF COMPLIMENTED THE THAI FOR THE HELP GIVEN HIS DELEGATION, AND FOR SIGNIFICANT RECENT RTG PROGRESS IN NARCOTICS SUPPRESSION. WOLFF RAISED TWO SUBSTANTIVE PROBLEMS: THE CONTINUED TRAFFICKING BY GENERAL LI AND TUAN, AND THE FEASIBILITY OF AN AERIAL SURVEY OF OPIUM-GROWING AREAS IN THAILAND. PRAPHAT REPLIED THAT IT WAS POSSIBLE TO MOVE AGAINST THE GENERALS BUT ADDRESSING THE WHOLE KMT STRUCTURE WAS BEYOND THAI CAPABILITY. HE SAID THAT CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BANGKO 12888 01 OF 02 171743Z

ENOUGH STUDIES HAD BEEN DONE OF THE OPIUM-GROWING AREAS, AND HE PREFERRED CONCRETE HELP FOR HILLTRIBESMEN (IN THE FORM OF DEVELOPMENT AND SUBSTITUTE CROPS) RATHER THAN MORE SURVEY; NEVERTHELESS HE CONCURRED IN FURTHER CONSULTATIONS ON THIS

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

MATTER WITH US MISSION. THE SESSION CONCLUDED BY WOLFF'S STATEMENT
THAT THE U.S. NEEDED THAI HELP WITH A U.S. PROBLEM, AND HE
PROMISED AID FOR THAI NEEDS IN RETURN. END SUMMARY.

1. REPRESENTATIVE WOLFF GRACIOUSLY EXPRESSED HIS THANKS FOR
THE TIME AND COURTESY EXTENDED TO HIS DELEGATION IN THAILAND.
HE SAID THE RTG HAD BEEN EXTREMELY COOPERATIVE AND HAD GIVEN
THE GROUP ALL THE INFORMATION IT SOUGHT. HE MENTIONED THAT A
GREAT STEP FORWARD WAS BEING TAKEN WITH THE CURRENT COMMUNI-
CATIONS BEING ESTABLISHED BETWEEN THAILAND AND BURMA, AND CON-
GRATULATED THE RTG ON LO HSING-HAN'S CAPTURE, WHICH HE DES-
CRIBED A "QUITE SIGNIFICANT." MARSHAL PRAPHAT REPLIED THAT HE
WAS HAPPY THAT THE CODEL HAD A CHANCE TO VISIT THAILAND AND TO
SEE AND LEARN WITH ITS OWN EYES THE PROBLEMS THAILAND FACED.

2. WOLFF THEN RAISED SUBSTANTIVE PROBLEMS. THE FIRST CONCERNED
REPORTS OF CONTINUING TRAFFICKING OF CHINESE IRREGULAR FORCE(CIF)
GENERALS LI AND TUAN. HE SAID THAT THOUGH EFFORTS TO RESETTLE
THE CIF WERRE GOOD, WE HAD SOME INDICATIONS THAT THEY
WERE CONTINUING THEIR TRAFFICKING CONNECTIONS WITH THEIR OWN
PEOPLE IN BURMA AND ASKED PRAPHAT FOR HIS VIEWS. PRAPHAT SAID
THAT THE KMT REPRESENTED A PROBLEM INHERITED FROM WORLD WAR II.
THE THAI COULD NOT SEND THEM OUT OF THE COUNTRY BECAUSE THEY HAD
NOWHERE ELSE TO GO, AND THEY "COULD NOT KILL THEM." PRAPHAT SAID:
"WE KNOW THEY TRAFFICK IN OPIUM; WE HAVE WORKED WITH THEM FOR
20 YEARS." HE SAID THAT THE KMT ARE LARGELY IN THE JUNGLE, AND
ARE SPREAD ALL OVER THE NORTH NEAR THE BORDER. THE RTG DID NOT
HAVE THE POWER TO FORCE THEM COMPLETELY OUT OF BUSINESS.
WITH REFERENCE TO THE SEPARATE PROBLEM OF THE HILLTRIBE OPIUM
GROWERS, PRAPHAT POINTED UP THE DIFFICULTY OF FINDING A SUBSTITUTE
CROP FOR OPIUM THAT WOULD OFFER THE SAME MONETARY RETURN.

3. WOLFF RETURNED THE DISCUSSION TO THE CIF GENERALS. HE POINTED
OUT THAT THE RTG HAD AN AGREEMENT WITH THEM TO GET OUT OF THE
OPIUM BUSINESS, AND THEY HAD BROKEN IT. HE ASKED WHAT SPECIFICALLY
THE THAI COULD DO TO STOP LI AND TUAN FROM TRAFFICKING WITH THE
SHAN. PRAPHAT REPLIED THAT HE COULD EASILY HANDLE THE TWO GENERALS
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PAGE 03 BANGKO 12888 01 OF 02 171743Z

AND NOTED THAT THE RTG HAS PUT LI AND TUAN UNDER SURVEILLANCE,
BUT THERE WAS NO POSSIBILITY OF ACCOUNTING FOR ALL THE KMT
TOGETHER, PRESUMABLY INCLUDING THOSE IN BURMA. WOLFF THEN SAID
HE WAS GOING TO RECOMMEND THAT A MARKETING ORGANIZATION BE SET
UP TO HANDLE THE DISPOSAL OF WHATEVER SUBSTITUTE CROPS IT IS
POSSIBLE TO PERSUADE THE HILLTRIBESMEN TO GROW IN PLACE OF OPIUM.

4. WOLFF THEN RAISED A FURTHER PROBLEM: AN AERIAL SURVEY OF
OPIUM-GROWING AREAS WHICH HE DESCRIBED AS ANOTHER SENSITIVE
TOPIC. WOLFF SAID THAT SOME PEOPLE ON THE U.S. SIDE WERE NOT
ATTUNED TO THIS PROBLEM AND HAD ORIGINALLY DISAPPROVED THE SURVEY.
HE SAID WE INTEND TO BRING THEM TO TASK FOR THIS. HE ASKED
PRAPHAT WHETHER THERE WAS ANY REASON WHY THIS PROGRAM COULD NOT BE

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

PERMITTED. PRAPHAT REPLIED THAT THERE WAS ALREADY A JOINT U.S.-
THAI MAPPING VENTURE UNDER WAY, AND THAT THE THAI SAW NO NECESSITY
FOR A FURTHER ONE. IT WOULD BE A WASTE OF MONEY; FUNDS SHOULD BE
SPENT ON HELPING THE HILLTRIBESMEN. WOLFF SAID THAT IT WAS OUR
INTEREST NOT TO BREACH IN ANY MANNER THAI SECURITY, BUT THAT LOW-
LEVEL AERIAL MAPPING WOULD BE HIGHLY USEFUL. AMBASSADOR UNGER
INTERJECTED THAT, AS HE UNDERSTOOD IT, THE SURVEY THAT PRAPHAT
WAS REFERRING TO WAS A UNILATERAL THAI PROGRAM OPERATING
NATIONWIDE AND WOULD TAKE SEVERAL YEARS. IF IT WERE SUFFICIENT
TO GIVE THE REQUIRED INFORMATION, PERHAPS THE THAI AND THE
AMERICANS COULD GET TOGETHER LATER TO SEE WHETHER THE SURVEY
SCHEDULE COULD BE ACCELERATED FOR THE OPIUM GROWING AREA.
PRAPHAT DID NOT REJECT THIS BUT STRESSED THAT THE THAI HAD
ALREADY MADE A SURVEY FROM THE GROUND, KNEW THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE
IN EACH VILLAGE, AND HOW MUCH OPIUM IS GROWING. HE SAID WHAT
NEEDS TO BE DONE IS TO START WORKING. HE ADDED THAT THERE IS NO
SECURITY OBJECTION BUT THAI LAW MAY FORBID THIS TYPE OF LOW-
LEVEL AERIAL MAPPING.

5. CONGRESSMAN MURPHY INTERJECTED THAT HE WAS MOST PLEASED
TO SEE THE "VIGOROUS PROSECUTION" OF NARCOTICS CONTROL
PROGRAMS NOW UNDERWAY IN THAILAND. HE ALSO PRAISED
THAILAND' S EFFORTS TO POLICE ITS NORTHERN BORDERS. THIS,
HE SAID, IS A FAR BETTER SITUATION THAN DURING HIS LAST
VISIT TO THAILAND TWO YEARS AGO.

6. WOLFF CONCLUDED BY SAYING THAT HE AND CONGRESSMAN MURPHY
HAD BEEN CO-AUTHORS OF A PREVIOUS AMENDMENT TO THE AID BILL
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PAGE 04 BANGKO 12888 01 OF 02 171743Z

WHICH WAS DESIGNED TO CUT AID TO THAILAND BECAUSE OF THEIR
VIEW THAT THE RTG WAS NOT MOVING AGAINST NARCOTICS TRAFFICK-
ING. HE SAID THAT BECAUSE OF THE GREATER THAI EFFORT THEY DID
NOT PUT IN THIS AMENDMENT THIS YEAR. HE ADDED THAT HE WAS GOING
BACK TO WASHINGTON AS CHIEF OF A NEW SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL
NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING. HE WAS RETURNING WITH A MUCH BETTER
FEELING THAN WHEN HE CAME BECAUSE HE HAD ENCOUNTERED AN
ENTIRELY DIFFERENT ATMOSPHERE FROM HIS PREVIOUS VISIT TO THAILAND.
HE SAID: "WE ONLY CRITICIZE OUR FRIENDS; TO OUR ENEMIES WE
SAY VERY LITTLE." HE CONCLUDED BY STATING THAT, IN THE SPIRIT
OF COMING TO A FRIEND, THE U.S. NEEDED THAI HELP WITH A US
PROBLEM. IF THE THAI NEEDED US HELP, "WE STAND BY TO HELP YOU."

7. BESIDES WOLFF, THE CODEL CONSISTED OF CONGRESSMEN MURPHY,
RANGEL, AND STARK, AS WELL AS JOHN BRADY, STAFF CONSULTANT.
BESIDE PRAPHAT, THE THAI SIDE INCLUDED DEPUTY INTERIOR MINISTER
MALAI HUVANANDANA, DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL OF POLICE LT.
GENERAL PRACHUAB SUNTRANKUN, AND MAJOR GENERAL POW SARASIN,
SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE CENTRAL NARCOTICS BUREAU. AMBASSADOR
UNGER, DEPUTY CHIEF OF MISSION MASTERS AND THE POLITICAL COUNSELOR
ACCOMPANIED THE CODEL.
 UNGER

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PAGE 01 BANGKO 12888 02 OF 02 171632Z

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ACTION EA-13

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 SS-14 H-01 SNM-02 NSC-10 INR-10 CIAE-00

NSCE-00 DODE-00 RSR-01 RSC-01 /053 W
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5796
AMEMBASSY RANGOON
AMEMBASSY SAIGON
AMEMBASSY SEOUL
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AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI
AMCONSUL UDORN
EA HQS WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 BANGKOK 12888
LIMDIS
8. COMMENT: THE MEETING BETWEEN LEADING THAI INTERIOR MINISTRY AND POLICE OFFICIALS WITH CODEL WOLFF WAS IN SOME RESPECTS AN EXERCISE IN INTERCULTURAL NONCOMMUNICATION. THE THE CODEL IS PREOCCUPIED WITH A SERIOUS HEROIN ADDICTION PROBLEM IN THE US. THE RTG IS FRUSTRATED BY US PRESSURE TO COPE WITH VARIOUS MINORITY GROUPS FOR WHOM IT HAS INSUFFICIENT RESOURCES TO OFFER A SUBSTITUTE FOR OPIUM CULTIVATION AND WITH MOVEMENT THROUGH THAILAND OF OPIUM GROWN IN BURMA. THE MEETING WAS NEVERTHELESS
USEFUL IN ENABLING CONGRESSMAN WOLFF TO MEET THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER, WHO HEARD HIM EXPLAIN HIS PREVIOUS STRONG CRITICISM OF RTG ANTI-NARCOTICS EFFORTS. (NOTE: WOLFF DOES NOT FEEL HE "APOLOGIZED," AS PRESS STORIES FROM THAI SOURCES STATE.)
THE THAI ALSO HAD THE OCCASION TO SEE WOLFF, WHO WAS AT HIS DIPLOMATIC BEST, IN PERSON RATHER THAN THROUGH POLEMICS IN PRINT. WOLFF' S RAISING OF THE CONTINUED TRAFFICKING OF CIF GENERALS LI AND TUAN WAS A HELPFUL REINFORCEMENT OF AMBASSADOR UNGER'S AUGUST 9 APPROACH TO PRAPHAT ON THE SAME ISSUE (REFTEL). AS ONE OF THE THAI PARTICIPANTS AFTERWARDS EXPRESSED TO AN EMBASSY OFFICER,
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PAGE 02 BANGKO 12888 02 OF 02 171632Z

HOWEVER, THE RTG IS WEARY OF STUDIES AND DELEGATIONS ON THE NARCOTICS

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

PROGRAM, AND WOULD LIKE TO SEE MORE US ACTION. HE COMPLAINED THAT WHENEVER WASHINGTON WANTED SOMETHING BADLY IN THAILAND,THE EMBASSY DUTIFULLY AND INSISTENTLY PRESSURED THE RTG. ON THE OTHER HAND, WHENEVER THE THAI WANTED SOMETHING, THE US TENDED TO DEMAND EXCESSIVE QUID PRO QUO OR WASHINGTON TURNED DOWN THE REQUEST ALTOGETHER. IT WOULD THEREFORE BE MOST HELPFUL IF WE CAN GET RAPID AND POSITIVE WASHINGTON RESPONSE TO SOME NARCOTICS SUPPRESSION PROPOSALS THAT WE WILL BE FORWARDING WITHIN THE NEXT FEW DAYS.
UNGER

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EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

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RANGOON
SAIGON
SEOUL
TAIPEI
TOKYO
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